

HOUSE BILL NO. 644

INTRODUCED BY SESSO, A. NOONAN, GALLUS, LASLOVICH, HINER, VILLA, P. NOONAN, KEANE,
MCCLAFFERTY

A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT APPROPRIATING ~~\$300,000~~ \$200,000 FROM THE STATE
GENERAL FUND TO BE USED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE TO PROVIDE FUNDING FOR
CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT IN BUTTE-SILVER BOW; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE."

WHEREAS, the lingering effects of changes in mining practices worldwide and in southwestern Montana,
and the general and specific ripple effects of those changes, have reduced the availability of cultural resources
and the frequency, nature, and scope of cultural events in southwestern Montana, especially in Butte-Silver Bow;
and

WHEREAS, diminishing access to cultural resources and cultural events is only one of the ripple effects
felt by the residents of and visitors to southwestern Montana in general and Butte-Silver Bow in particular; and

WHEREAS, the reinvigoration of cultural resources and cultural events within Butte-Silver Bow has the
potential to create new jobs and stimulate greater economic vitality in Butte-Silver Bow specifically and in
southwestern Montana generally; and

WHEREAS, in 2008, Butte-Silver Bow hosted the 70th National Folk Festival, the oldest multicultural
festival in the nation, and will host the event in 2009 and 2010; and

WHEREAS, an estimated 75,000 people attended the 2008 Festival, a number that is expected to double
in 2009, with an economic impact of \$8 million in the Southwest Montana trade area; and

WHEREAS, the success of the 2008 National Folk Festival demonstrates that cultural events can provide
a sustainable basis for economic activity; and

WHEREAS, although events like the National Folk Festival bring entertainment, people, and money into
the host community and the surrounding area, funding is also necessary to plan and produce the events; and

WHEREAS, the late Representative George Groesbeck, Jr. recognized the importance of attracting
cultural events to Montana communities, not only to bolster local economies but to provide residents and tourists
with a unique opportunity to experience the wide range of music, art, and dance that multicultural events like the
National Folk Festival bring to a community; and

WHEREAS, it is the policy of the National Folk Festival to offer this cultural event at no charge to

1 maximize the opportunity for the general public; and

2 WHEREAS, the current economic climate in Montana and the nation makes it difficult to fund the planning
3 and production of events like the National Folk Festival.

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5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

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7 NEW SECTION. Section 1. Appropriation. (1) There is appropriated ~~\$300,000~~ \$200,000 from the state
8 general fund to the department of commerce for the biennium beginning July 1, 2009, for the sole purpose of
9 assisting Butte-Silver Bow in the reinvigoration of cultural resources and cultural events within Butte-Silver Bow
10 through grants or loans to the Butte-Silver Bow consolidated government, to the Butte-Silver Bow economic
11 development authority, or to other entities within Butte-Silver Bow whose primary purpose is the expansion or
12 enhancement of the cultural resources and cultural opportunities available within Butte-Silver Bow.

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14 NEW SECTION. Section 2. Effective date. [This act] is effective July 1, 2009.

15 - END -